

Kiersten Naumann
Centennial Drive
Milford, CT 06461

Feb. 22, 2023

Re: SUPPORT of H.B. 5434 An Act Concerning the Regulation of Cannabis

Dear Senator Maroney, Representative D'Agostino, Senator Cicarella, Representative Rutigliano, and Distinguished Members of the General Law Committee:

My name is Kiersten Naumann, and I am a resident of Milford. I am a member of the Executive Committee of the Connecticut Association of Prevention Professionals (CAPP) and Co-Chair of the Connecticut affiliate of Smarter Approaches to Marijuana (CT SAM). I am also the mother of two teen boys.

I am testifying today **IN SUPPORT** of H.B. 5434, specifically:

1) Establishing a potency cap on each serving and requiring potency disclosure on packaging:

- a. Although research shows that negative consequences associated with marijuana use increase significantly with products over 10% THC, setting a cap at 30% THC on all THC products and servings will still minimize some level of risk. **I urge you to explicitly include all vape products containing THC, as local youth surveys across the state demonstrate that vaping is the preferred method of ingestion among youth.**

2) Further expansion of packaging requirements to protect children from accidental ingestion of cannabis products, and to reflect negative consequences of marijuana consumption, including:

- a. Requiring that cannabis products be sold in child-proof containers. This should be in statute, not just in DCP regulations. Furthermore, a more detailed definition of "child-proof packaging" should be explicit in the law.
- b. Requiring warning labels to state that cannabis products may be addictive, lead to birth defects or cause psychosis, and that secondhand cannabis smoke is toxic to human health. However, I do not think these warnings go far enough. Warning labels should align with alcohol and tobacco products, to include warning graphics. Furthermore, all cannabis points of sale should be required to display health warning information on large, bilingual posters that include easily understood graphics, with warnings like those required by the Vermont Cannabis Board and suggested by the Vermont Medical Society, including:
 - to keep all cannabis products away from children and pets,
 - not to use cannabis while pregnant or breastfeeding as it can harm the fetus/nursing infant,
 - that using edibles contain additional dangers,
 - that marijuana may not be transported across state lines,
 - that persons under the age of 25 who use marijuana are more likely to experience harms to their brains,
 - that is against the law to drive or operate machinery when under the influence of THC products,

- that marijuana use can cause uncontrollable vomiting, psychosis, addiction, and suicidal ideation, and
 - that it is dangerous and illegal to drive under the influence of marijuana.
- 3) Prohibiting any gas station, convenience store, or other non-licensed cannabis retailer to sell any THC products** including, but not limited to Delta 8, Delta 10, Delta 11, THC-O and any other THC derivative created from Hemp or the cannabis plant.
- 4) Prohibiting marijuana consumption wherever it is illegal to consume alcohol.** Furthermore, penalties for marijuana law violations, especially for youth possession, should not be less than those for alcohol. This may incentivize illicit dealers to use minors to make their transactions without concern for penalties or a criminal record.
- 5) Provisions to keep our roads safe from THC impaired drivers, including:**
- a. Financial support to send officers to the Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) certification training. Currently, CT has only approximately 50 DRE officers. To receive certification, officers must follow a vigorous three-phase training curriculum and learn to conduct a standardized and systemic 12-step evaluation consisting of physical, mental and medical compounds. This training is extremely costly, and requires officers to be away from their departments for a period of two weeks, putting an enormous strain on already underfunded and understaffed departments across the state. But, as there is no reliable roadside test for THC impairment, DREs are essential to keeping our roads safe; other states with commercial marijuana sales have experienced alarming increases in impaired driving and crashes where THC impairment is involved.
 - b. Repealing restrictions on cannabis-related stops and searches of persons and motor vehicles when officers observe drivers or passengers actively marijuana.
 - c. Specifying that "imminent risk of serious harm" includes a situation where a parent or guardian, visibly under the influence of cannabis, tries to pick up a child from a school or day care facility.
 - d. Requiring each applicant for a motor vehicle operator license under the age of 18 complete a course on the impairing effects of cannabis and its impact on an individual's ability to operate a motor vehicle.
- 6) Requiring the Department of Consumer Protection to** (A) review and approve each cannabis product type and its dosage, (B) review cannabis tracking procedures in retail establishments and pharmacies, and (C) designate cannabis as a Schedule II controlled substance.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,
Kiersten Naumann